

## KEY ISSUES IN PRONUNCIATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

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**Abstract.** *This paper aims at stressing current perspectives on pronunciation learning and teaching. It summarizes the background of pronunciation teaching, emphasizes the need for incorporating pronunciation into foreign language classes owing to regarding pronunciation as a key to gaining full communicative competence, and takes into account present-day views in pronunciation pedagogy like the impact of the discipline of psychology.*

**Keywords:** *languages, phonetics, phonology, language teaching, pronunciation, phonology assessment.*

## КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ПРОИЗНОШЕНИЮ

**Аннотация.** *Эта статья направлена на то, чтобы подчеркнуть современные взгляды на изучение произношения и преподавание. В нем обобщаются предпосылки обучения произношению, подчеркивается необходимость включения произношения в занятия по иностранному языку в связи с тем, что произношение рассматривается как ключ к обретению полной коммуникативной компетенции, и учитываются современные взгляды на педагогику произношения, такие как влияние дисциплины психологии. .*

**Ключевые слова:** *языки, фонетика, фонология, обучение языку, произношение, фонологическая оценка.*

## INTRODUCTION

This section introduces some of the main components of speech which together combine to form the pronunciation of a language. These components range from the individual sounds that make up speech, to the way in which pitch- the rise and fall of the voice- is used to convey meaning. The definite characteristics of English pronunciation are play up, together with important differences between English and other languages. It is these differences which often result in difficulties for learners. It would seem advisable to postpone the introduction of others until at least the intermediate level. We also need to recognize that the receptive acquisition of a new variety of a second language will take place over some time and only by dint of sustained exposure. The current state of theory lends support to three different ways of looking at the acquisition of the vowels and consonants of the second language. Let us briefly consider how each might enable teachers to add usefully to their present range of pronunciation tasks. In line with much of the discussion in this article, the suggestions for activities relate specifically to ear training as the first step in familiarizing learners with English sounds, syllables and words. Languages have different accents, they are pronounced differently by people from different geographical places, from different social classes, of different ages and different educational backgrounds. The word “accent” is often confused with dialect. We use the word “dialect” to refer to a variety of a language which is different from others not just in pronunciation but also in such matters as vocabulary, grammar and word- order. Differences of accent, on the other hand, are pronunciation differences only.

The accent that we be immersed in and use our model is the one that is most often recommended for foreign learners studying British English. It is most familiar as the accent

used by most anchorpersons and newsreaders on serious national and international BBC transmit channels. One crucial issue is how attention to pronunciation resulting in language-related episodes effectively leads to robust gains in accuracy. Another important aspect discussed is the need to adapt task design features to the phonological domain under focus and how to incorporate systematic patterns of first language interference into the task structure. Finally, we propose that future research in task-based pronunciation teaching and second language phonetics and phonology should systematically examine learner factors known to affect task performance and task features established in the research domains of lexical and grammatical development. This article reports on teachers' knowledge and perceptions and the issues they are concerned about in relation to pronunciation teaching. Understanding teacher cognition helps to ensure research and pedagogical advice are appropriately directed. A number of themes emerged, including a lack of initial training and knowledge of phonology, leading to uncertainty about exactly what should be taught and how. This often meant pronunciation was neglected, especially in areas such as stress and intonation. Concerns included how to teach pronunciation in mixed-first language classes and how to help learners with speech perception. The findings raise questions for reflective practice, teacher education and professional development. This teaching English as the target second language involves several considerations which have to do with both the source language of speakers and the kind of training these students go through.

Although English as a second language and English foreign language learners are motivated by a wide range of academic employment and social goals, at the most basic level they all want to communicate more comprehensibly in English. To this end, many English as a second language and English as a foreign language students register for grammar and vocabulary classes. However, even though students may spend hours mastering grammatical structures and memorizing vocabulary words, one of the most crucial aspects of second language communication is comprehensible pronunciation. After all, it doesn't matter how large students' personal word banks may be or how accurate and complex their grammatical structures are if their pronunciation is difficult to understand. Simply put, while other linguistic challenges may make a spoken exchange difficult, incomprehensible pronunciation can literally stop a conversation. It is for this reason that most language teachers and students agree that acquiring intelligible pronunciation is a vital part of learning a new language. Despite the central role that intelligible pronunciation plays in successful communication, it is often sidelined in English as a second language and English as a foreign language classrooms. Teachers devote curricular space to the study of grammar and vocabulary, even while pronunciation may be marginalized. Some reasons for its marginalization include the lack of consistent attention to pronunciation in English second language and English as a foreign language textbooks, the inadequacy of pronunciation preparation in teacher training programmes and the dearth of stand-alone pronunciation courses available to many English as a second language and English as a foreign language students. However, this challenging situation provides an interesting opportunity in English language teaching to approach pronunciation as an integral of communication rather than as an afterthought. Along those lines, teachers can assign simple homework assignments that require students to listen to authentic English via the Internet or other easily accessible media. Here are some examples:

- Go to [www.favoritepoem.org/videos.html](http://www.favoritepoem.org/videos.html) and select a video. Listen to the speaker read the poem and discuss why he or she loves it. Write several questions you would like to ask this speaker if you had the opportunity. Practice asking the questions.
- Go to <http://english-trailers.org/index.php> and select a movie trailer. Pick your favorite line in the trailer. Practice saying the line exactly like the actor. Now record yourself. Listen to your recording. Record again until you are satisfied.

Among my criteria for suitable internet sites is the availability of transcript that students can mark and bring back to class-tangible evidence that students have completed the assignment.

- Pronunciation teaching has to establish in the minds of language learners a set of distinct consonant and vowel sounds. ( Field)
- Students would make better progress in pronunciation if they just practiced more. ( Grant)
- Accent reduction and pronunciation instruction are the same thing. ( Thompson)
- Once you've been speaking a second language for years, it's too late to change your pronunciation.

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